1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

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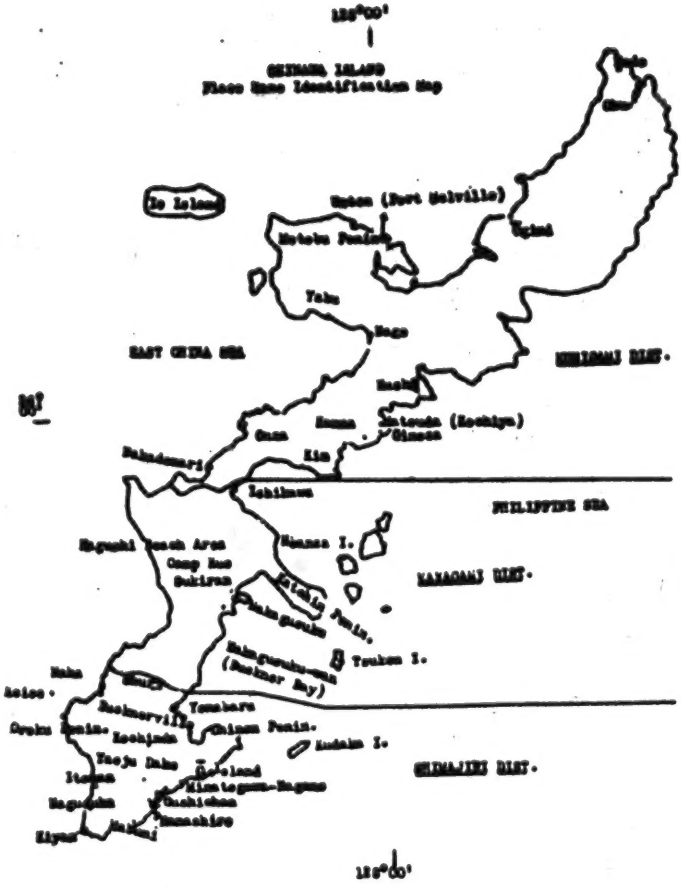


[P. i (E)]

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

# 1

## Okinawa, Asia, and the Pacific

The Ryukyus, of which Okinawa, the Great Loo Choo of the nineteenth century explorers, is the largest island, is an arc, really the summits of submerged mountains, extending in a southwesterly direction from the Kyūshū node almost to the island of Formosa. The arc is bowed outward and the archipelago forms a tenuous boundary separating the East China Sea from the Pacific.

The islands may be thought of as a link in a chain of peninsulas and archipelagos shaped like a rough semicircle from Korea to Kyūshū, the Ryukyus and to Formosa, thence to the mainland of China. These peninsulas and the island chains and the coastal mainland, together with the Wei, Lo, and Fen valleys in the Hwang-ho northward bend, have been the scene of cultural interminglings from ancient times, but the area still awaits comparative study as a whole.

The direct and indirect influences which, considering its geography and insular position, have done most to fashion the culture of Okinawa have come from China, Korea, and the Japanese islands, in early times southwestern Japan, especially Kyūshū. With the exception of the visits of European missions and squadrons in the nineteenth century, Western ideas came from Japanese sources. Okinawa, in the great era of the expansion of European ideas and influence in the nineteenth century, was exposed to Westernization indirectly through Japan.

Geographical relationships change with the times, shifts in the power of empire, and changes in trade. To the late nineteenth century observer, and indeed to the twentieth as well, Okinawa seemed one of the most isolated and unexplored spots in a part of the world which had been known to the West for centuries. This isolation was more a product of history than of geography. "Each year," wrote William Furness in 1897, "finds the Luchu Islands more and more important, commercially, to the Japanese government, although as yet, they are but little known to the busy world which sails past them to and from the markets of China, Japan, and the Far East."[1] Yet, from the middle of the fourteenth to the second half of the sixteenth century, Naha in Okinawa was a port of call in a trade route which included Korea, Japan, Siam, and Malaya. Malacca was the central port of this trade. It has been estimated that there were at least forty-four voyages out of Naha to these lands in the 138 year period from 1432 to 1570.[2]

1 William H. Furness III, Life in the Luchu Islands. Bulletin of the Free Museum of Science and Art of the University of Pennsylvania, 2 (1899), 1.

2 This trade will be discussed further in the next chapter with sources cited there.

1:Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

175
648 This nineteenth century conception of the Ryukyus as remote and isolated islands in a part of the world in which travel and trade had reached a high degree of development continued unabated to the beginning of the war in the Pacific. The reasons were entirely political. The Ryukyus were part of that walling off process which characterized Japan's policy and strategy toward its island mandates and possessions since the end of the first world war. Okinawa might well have become, as some of the English and American explorers of the nineteenth century hoped, a crossroads of importance in world trade. If it had, it would only have repeated a role it played centuries before.

Since the invasion of 1945, worldwide political realignments have given it a new, and perhaps its most important significance. Its general geography has remained the same. It is the history since the war, and the shaping of ideologies that have brought about this change. Before 1945, Okinawa was regarded by the Japanese as the outer fort and protector of the home islands; during the war, it became the important strategic spot, from the American point of view, for the contemplated invasion of Japan. With the Korean war, it has been transformed from a small outlier in the Pacific to an important strategic center off the Asiatic mainland.

2

## Regional Differences in Okinawa Island[3]

131
133 Okinawa, the largest of the islands in the Ryukyu chain, is about 485 square miles in area, 510 including its offshore islands, such as the Keram

[TEXT CONTINUES ON TOP OF P. 12--ANALYST]

114 3 A cultural geography of Okinawa is a real desideratum. But this is outside the scope of this work. Many materials have been brought together in memoranda, published and unpublished, surveys and the like, since the close of the war and the beginning of the American occupation. Lacking a newer synthesis, it seemed foolish to lengthen this report by merely repeating the published materials already available. The intention in this chapter is merely to indicate some of the general considerations helpful in understanding the history of the island and of contemporary life in the villages described. For the pre-war geographical materials see Civil Affairs Handbook, Ryukyu (Loo-choo) Islands, OPNAV 3-13, 3-38, the sections on geography and resources, and passim. Interesting information regarding local geography is scattered through the pages of Okinawa, The Last Battle, and for a general statement, see pp. 7-14. See also Walter R. Hacker's chapter on the Kurils and the Ryukyus in Geography of the Pacific, edited by Otis Freeman, New York and London, 1951, and M. Y. Nuttonson, Ecological Crop Geography and Field Practices of the Ryukyu Islands..., 11-58. For the geology, see, the CA Handbook, 11-12, Nuttonson, 29-36, and Engineering Geology, Okinawa (Prepared by Military Geology Branch US Geological Survey for Intelligence Division Office of the Engineer, GHQ, FEC, April 1951). This contains an Engineering Geology map of the island. For general relationships in this area see Trewartha, Glenn. T. Japan. A Physical, Cultural, and Regional Geography, v-ix, 3-4, and the map on the arcs and nodes, 8.

114
113

chain, Ie, Ihoya, and Kudaka islands. The main island is about sixty miles long, its length running generally northeast to southwest. It has an irregular coast line, peninsulas which jut out into the sea, and two isthmuses, one near present Camp Kue, the other farther north at Ishikawa. The width of the island varies from two to eighteen miles. 133 131

Okinawa may be divided into three geographical regions, which also roughly correspond to the ancient division of the island into a northern district (Kunigami or Yambaru), a central district (Nakagami), and a southern district (Shimajiri). [631]

The northern district takes up about two-thirds of the area of the island. It begins at the northern isthmus which runs from Ishikawa town on the Pacific side to Nakadomari on the East China Sea side. South of this line, the island runs more or less in a north-south direction; north of the line, the island is situated in a pronounced northeast-southwest direction. Certain features distinguish this northern area from the two southern parts of Okinawa. A mountain ridge, almost entirely forested, runs down the center. Drainage from the short streams which rise in the mountains is down the east and west slopes. Villages and towns are on or near the coastal flatlands or on the coastal rolling hills. There are few settlements in the interior of the northern part of the island. 131 631 133 [139] [361]

The central region of the island extends south from the Ishikawa-Nakadomari isthmus to the Naha-Yonabaru line. A corridor beginning on the eastern side at Yonabaru on Buckner Bay (formerly Nakagusuku-wan) connects with a long valley beginning around Naha. This provides a natural route cutting across the southern part of the island. The central region is the area of oldest settlement. It and the region to the south were the areas of the most intensive warfare during the campaign for Okinawa. The central region has a patternless physiography. Low rolling eroded hills, stony hills with sharp relief, dissected uplands and escarpments alternate with small alluvial valleys and flatlands. On these and on the lower slopes of the less stony hills cultivation takes place. Limestone sinks and caverns are commonplace. The most rugged terrain in this area is the region around Shuri and its northern approaches, the scene of the most prolonged fighting of the war in Okinawa. Unlike the north, settlements are scattered throughout the countryside, usually on the low lands at the base of hills, along the coasts, or in narrow winding valleys with low passes leading from one to the other. [487] [361]

The third region of the island extends from the Naha-Yonabaru line to the southern tip of the island. It is like the central part in the haphazard distribution of its land forms but somewhat flatter. Part of it is a limestone plain. The highest elevations are around the hills and mountains along Buckner Bay, with its narrow flat coastal strips, and along the southern portion of the Chinen peninsula, which also has flat beaches and beach ridges. It is an area of small plains, long, narrow but steep limestone mountains, and of rolling hills, escarpments which often abruptly end on the water's edge. In the area of one of these escarpments, Yaeju Dake, the final battle scenes of the war took place. The settlement

pattern is similar to that of the central part. Villages are scattered throughout the area with population distribution comparable with the central area. Before the war, the densities here were over one thousand per square mile, actually considerably more if the uninhabitable lands are subtracted.[4]

How long this settlement pattern and these regional differences have existed is difficult to say. In studying contemporary environments, like Okinawa, which bear the imprint of long human settlement, it is useful to try to reconstruct the nature of the landscape before the interference of man. At one time, the whole island, with the exception of stony, rocky, and shallow soils and beach and marsh land was covered with forest. There are now no virgin stands. "It is evident that the present forest has been cut over many times. There seems to be no part of the island in which the forest cover has not been disturbed in some way by man."[5] In this light, the regional differences between the forested north and the deforested south are the work of man.

The oldest settlements are thought to have been in the Naha and Shuri areas. Kudaka Island, off the southeast coast, according to one legend, was the site of the supernatural creation of the Okinawan people. The town of Unten, the Port Melville of Captain Hall and Commodore Perry, was, in one version, the scene of the landing of the Japanese warrior, Tametomo, but this was in the twelfth century. Northern areas were inhabited prior to the unification of the island in the twelfth century because they had their own regional chieftans before this. But the population of the north, at least up to the war, has been sparse and scattered. If the forests are any indication, it has been the central and southern regions which have been the scenes of longest settlement. Probably the settlement pattern had not changed much until the Japanese interventions of the nineteenth century and the great changes coming with the recent war, and with the extensive modifications which the Americans have made in the landscape of the central region.

## 3

## General Climatic Conditions

In the Köppen system, Okinawa has a humid subtropical climate. It is a rainy climate with no marked dry season; it has a mild winter and the temperature of the warmest month is over 71.6°F. The average annual temperatures in Naha range from 61° for January and February to 82°F for July and August, and the range from the mean minimum of 55° in February to the

[TEXT CONTINUES TOP of P. 14--Analyst]

4 See the population distribution maps in CA Handbook, Ryukyu (Loo-choo Islands, 48-49.

5 Okinawan Forests. (Prepared by the USGS, Military Geology Section under the direction of Office of the Engineer, GHQ, Far East Command), 1948, 2.

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

Each contemporary extended family has two main divisions: the main family (honke in Japanese) represented by the families in the direct line of descent, and the branch families (bunke in Japanese) which represent families not in the direct line. The terms, main family and branch family, are also used in a narrower sense to distinguish, within an individual family, between the family of the first son who will succeed to his father's house, and other sons who will establish branch houses.

The extended family has a main house whose head is the living representative in direct succession of the original founder. The seat of each extended family is a definite site in a village or town. The degree of scattering of the collateral families is dependent on the mobility of people throughout time and the manner in which the original villages were settled. Hanashiro, for example, is considered to be about 400 years old. Sixteen of the main houses are in the village. In Minatogawa, founded as a secondary port for the fishermen of Itoman town, perhaps 250 years ago, the main houses are predominantly in Itoman. In the neighboring village of Nagamo (Minatogawa-niku), an area of recent settlement, the main house of the village families is generally in Naha or in Shuri. Matsuda in the north has family seats not only in the village but some of its collateral families are from adjoining areas, the Motobu peninsula, and also from the south. The location of the main family seats of any village is an indication of the areas from which the place was originally peopled. Considering the smallness of the island and the even more restricted inhabited area--settlement in the northern two-thirds of the island is along the coastal rim which borders the forest--and the general lack of mobility until recent times, it is apparent that each village is composed in varying proportions of kinship groups whose original ancestral house is either in that village or from other villages or towns, most likely from adjoining areas, or from such larger centers of dispersion as Naha, Shuri, Nago, or Itoman.

It is difficult to say how important the extended family is in the culture. It may be spread over many villages in the island. Distance and lack of contact does not create the strong ties that exist within the village among relatives, friends, and neighbors. The following illustrations, drawn from each village, may however furnish some clues regarding the nature and importance of the extended family.

In Hanashiro, there are sixteen head houses. These with their collateral branches total 75 families; in other words, of the 121 families in the village, the head house of 75 is located in the village itself. The head houses of the remaining 46 are in other villages or towns.[3] This situation makes for closer ties of the individual families

3 Parallel information was not available for the other two villages; it was apparent through discussion that the same situation existed, although the proportion of main and branch families might be different

244 [132] months. The amount of sweet potatoes grown is not closely related to the season. It depends much more on rainfall.

[031] [131] The effects of typhoons on the plant are most noticeable after transplanting. Salt water spray shrivels the transplants up and they die without developing. These conditions are more noticeable near the seashore in areas like Nagamo that lack trees and tidewater shelters.

824 Like rice, all of the sweet potato plant is used. Plant residues are turned under to fertilize the soil. This turning under of the vines or their use in composts is a doubtful blessing if the plants are diseased. The good potatoes are reserved for human consumption. [231] The poor or the diseased ones are mashed up in a stone mortar with a long pole, used like a pestle, for pig and goat food. Besides using the tops as slips, women constantly cut them off for fresh greens for [262] the pigs. The sweet potato is the basic food because it is cheap, can be grown the year round in lowlands and uplands, and can be cultivated by all members of the family. As pig food, it is a means of [462] inexpensively raising animals which later have cash value. The feeding and care of pigs is usually one of the incidental chores of women.

244 184 The varieties most commonly found in these Okinawan villages are the Okinawan #100 (Okinawan no hyakugo) and varieties known locally as the bentō, a small round tuber, and the bokuto. The two chief differences between the northern and southern villages in cultivating the sweet potato are (1) the two and three pronged hoes are much more in evidence in the north. With practice, they can be used advantageously in quickly weeding a plot while not cutting the potato itself. (2) Matsuda appears to be less dependent on the [262] sweet potato as a human food. The farmer here has more rice for him- [231] self and a greater proportion of his sweet potato crop goes for animal food.

6

The Planting of Sugar Cane and Sugar Making

249 Sugar cane (kibi) is grown on dry crop land, its rows often alternating on the same plot with the sweet potato. Cane may be started with cuttings, or it may be a second growth (ratoon) from the stubs of the old plant after it has been cut down for crushing. Cuttings may be purchased or selected plants from another planting are used. The slips are cut to leave three buds. These cuttings may be planted in three ways: (1) all horizontally, (2) horizontally with the cutting which comes from the topmost part of the stalk planted slantwise, or (3) all cuttings may be planted slanting.

The soil must be thoroughly worked with the ever present hoe. Plowing and harrowing are rarely done. The earth must be thoroughly fertilized. In addition, small amounts of compost may be placed under the cutting, and less often liquid night soil might be used.

21Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

# Part I

# The Ethnographic Background

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## Chapter 1

## The Setting

### THE ISLAND

105
Okinawa lies a day's voyage by steamer to the southwest of the Japa- 131 ●
nese island of Kyushu. Leaving Kyushu, the ship passes along the Ryukyuan chain until it reaches Okinawa, the largest of the islands. Land is never completely out of sight until the ship enters the port of Naha, capital of the southern Ryukyus.

The Ryukyus are part of a long string of islands which, beginning [133]
in the north with the Kurile Islands and Sakhalin, run all the way south, including Japan, the Ryukyus, Formosa, the Philippines, and the Indonesian archipelago. In their offshore position on the Western rim of the Pacific Ocean, the Ryukyus are within access by small craft from Japan, Korea, and China. This geographic position of the [648]
Ryukyus puts them within the sphere of influence of several countries,

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1956) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira



a fact which has been a determinant in their historical development and an important factor in speculations about prehistoric events.

Until further archaeological evidence permits greater certainty, the original settlement of the Ryukyus is believed to have taken place predominantly from the Asiatic mainland, with occasional influx from the southern islands, Formosa, the Philippines, and Indonesia (Kerr, 1958). Surviving culture elements of great antiquity support these theories. Most frequently cited are a basic form of Shinto, characteristic of the religion, and the shamanistic role of the priestesses. Specifically, the "curved jewels," formerly worn by all priestesses, are mentioned as apparent links with the neolithic cultures of Japan.

On the other hand, sporadic contact with the islands to the south is evidenced by culture traits, such as raised houses of tropical design (common to all of Japan) and perhaps the practice of "mother roasting," a period of recuperation after the birth of a child during which the mother is kept near a fire. This custom is widespread in Malaysia (Cole, 1945:155).

Linguistic evidence points to a separation of Okinawan from a common proto Japanese language about 1500 years ago (Hattori, 1954). This may indicate a southern movement of peoples from Japan under the pressure of the Yayoi people who introduced the wet rice complex into southwestern and central Japan at this period. That this was not the earliest settlement of the Ryukyus, however, is evidenced by remains in the Ryukyus of the earlier Jomon period.

From the first mention of the Ryukyus in Chinese annals of 605 A.D. until the end of the nineteenth century when Japan formally annexed the islands, they stood in a curious relationship of dependency toward China and Japan. Both nations claimed suzerainty over the kingdom of Okinawa with its royal court in Shuri and extracted tribute. Eventually the Lord of Satsuma in southern Japan extended his sovereignty over the Ryukyus. But with ties to China remaining, Okinawa participated in both Chinese and Japanese culture, which disseminated through the urban trading center of Naha into the outlying areas. It is this intermediate cultural position which still gives Okinawa a peculiar character, although it long ago became part of Japan and abandoned direct contacts with China.

In 1872 Japan formally declared its claims on the Ryukyuan kingdom, and after deposing the last king in 1879, made the Ryukyuan islands a province of Japan, with the capital at Naha. Between this time and the present, intensive contact with Japan has led to an overwhelming absorption of Japanese culture, a willingness on the part of Okinawans to adopt Japanese ways and to identify with Japan as their

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1983 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira



home country. Nevertheless, many aspects of Okinawan life still suggest an earlier phase in which independent developments gave the islands their own particular culture.

The Okinawan people, approximately 655,000 as counted in 1954, live in an area of about 454 square miles. Their major economic activities have traditionally been agriculture and fishing. In 1945 a long, peaceful existence was brought to an abrupt end during the final battles of World War II in the Pacific. As a result of world conditions Okinawans have been placed under American administration for an indefinite period of time. Today large numbers of men—and some women—find employment as unskilled and semiskilled laborers with the American forces. Gradual training for highly skilled jobs widens these opportunities for employment. Indirectly Okinawan life is influenced by Americans through stimulation of trade, building, and improved health conditions. Land requirements of the American forces in some areas also have influenced the settlement pattern. While these changes have affected the entire island to some degree, the greatest changes are noticeable in the central part around Naha where American administrative and military personnel are located. The village of Taira in the northern province of Kunigami, where the present study was located, had been subject to relatively few of these postwar changes in 1954. Isolated since earliest times because of mountainous terrain, this part of the island participates, as it probably always did, marginally in cultural influences which affect the center of the island. A great deal of cultural stability has therefore been preserved until the present day.

Nevertheless, it is useful to remember that the population of northern Okinawa is linked with the rest of the island by an efficient communications system. Roads connect almost all settlements in the north with the central island, and a bus transportation system extends its service into the remote areas. But long before all villages were connected by road with the center of Okinawa, people of Kunigami province traveled by foot over the many trails which traverse the mountains, and, since the turn of the century, many have left their home villages. Some went to Japan as laborers; others settled in the Japanese-controlled Islands of the Pacific, and some families joined the numerous Okinawan settlements in South American countries.

## LANGUAGE

Taira people are bilingual. Okinawan, which linguists consider a separate language, has many regional dialects, some of which are not

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-6 (1964-1965) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira



is one of the rare, desired body attributes. It was the opinion of some that the descendants of the noble families who came from Shuri, however, are taller and slender, with a prominent, curved nasal ridge.

Until they feel confident in the presence of strangers, Taira people appear quiet and restrained. It is considered a virtue not to show one's emotions, and Tairans consider the expressiveness of Americans childish. Actually they are gay, talkative, and given to laughter, especially the women. Men are quiet unless stimulated by alcohol, but both men and women may lose their composure in emergencies. A notable exception is their placid reactions to the threat of disaster from the ever recurrent violent storms.

## THE COMMUNITY, ITS HISTORY AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Taira is one of the northern villages on the northeast coast of Okinawa in Higashi township (see map 1). Today it is home to over 700 people who make their living—as did their ancestors since early times—from the surrounding fields, forests, and from the sea. The Okinawan name for the village, Taira, means "sloping fields." The character used for writing the prevalent Japanese version, Taira, means "flat, plain, good."

Since the family records were lost during World War II, it is necessary to depend on oral traditions for reconstruction of the history of Taira. Unfortunately, the desire of many Okinawans to establish a relationship between their local families and the former royal courts casts some doubt on the accuracy of these traditions.

According to these traditions, the first village to be settled in the vicinity of Taira was the neighboring community Kawata. After the Hokuzan kingdom in Nakijin (on the northwestern Motobu Peninsula) was conquered by the southern Okinawan kingdom of Chuzan in the fifthteenth century (Kerr, 1958:85), the second son of the Lord of Hokuzan is said to have escaped northward into Kunigami province. Unitokogami, the fleeing nobleman, arrived near the present site of Kawata and established himself in a cave around the year 1477. He is still revered today as founder of the village in a yearly spring ceremony when prayers are said in front of the cave. The oldest Taira families trace their descent in the male line from Nizenya, the "main house," he founded. Taira was settled around 1550 by two families tracing descent from this "main house." The descendents of these settlers are

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

# Chapter 5

# Political Organization and Social Control

## THE TOWNSHIP

621
631 Administratively Taira village is part of Higashi township, an area of
[131] approximately 30 square miles with six independent villages spread over a distance of about 15 miles along the coast. Taira is centrally located and since 1946 has been the seat of the township administration. Higashi is one of several townships in northern Okinawa. It is responsible to the central Ryukyuan government at Naha which has branch offices at Nago, the nearest town to Taira. Control over communities such as Taira by a central government is of ancient date. The Okinawan king levied taxes throughout the island and held political control over the villages until establishment of Japanese administration.

632 The township office is headed by a mayor who is elected for four years by popular vote. He nominates an assistant mayor who must be confirmed by the township assembly, a council of 16 representatives who are elected from all the villages. The Assembly meets two or three times a year to enact local ordinances, to confirm the mayor's appointments, and to approve the annual budget.

632
647 The administrative organization of the township consists of five departments, which are responsible for carrying out central government policies. The Finance and Education Department is concerned with tax collection and general school affairs. The Industrial Department acts as controlling and advising agent in all matters of subsistence and cash production. Financial help for farmers is channeled through this department. Attached to it is an Agricultural Extension Division agent who is concerned with individual farmers' problems. A General Affairs
[217] Department is in charge of office administration; it is also responsible

# CHAPTER I: GEOGRAPHY

F. R. Pitts

131 **Location** Okinawa is a longish island, lying about halfway between Formosa and the southern tip of Kyushu. Together with clusters of islands lying both to the east and west, it forms the political unit known as Okinawa Guntō.

133 Along the axis of Okinawa, which trends from southwest to northeast, there is a fairly simple division into a plateau-and-mountain northern half, a central plateau area, and a low rolling southern knob. The Motobu peninsula juts westward from the northern, or Kunigami, half and forms a distinctive area. Between the Kunigami mountains and the peaks of Motobu lies the ricebowl of Okinawa---the Haneji lowland.

311 241 **Arable Land** In general it can be said that the farm population increases as one proceeds south. Map 2, showing the arable land under cultivation as a percentage of the total land area, illustrates this.[1]

Farms in the mountain and plateau north are found in incised V-shaped valleys. Water is plentiful, and rice paddies cover the valley floor. Villages hug the edges of the flat land, and incredibly small sweet-potato terraces rise [137] up the valley's edge. Atop the plateau one finds only silence, and a dense growth of trees and bamboo. Many of the people in the valleys are part-time [132] foresters. The Motobu mountains guard from the frequent typhoons little settlements famed for growing the indigo plant and pineapples. The peninsula's north shore is a fertile but ever-narrowing extension of the Haneji lowland.

In the central plateau area---Nakagami---sweet-potato fields compete with scrubby forest for space on the plateau. Where sufficient water is available, rice fields cover the tiny valley floors and the low-lying coastal [134] fringes. The triangular southern end of the island is known as Shimajiri in popular terminology. Shimajiri is blessed with the greatest concentration of [132] fertile arable land on Okinawa. But the blessing is somewhat reduced by greater exposure to typhoons and a chronic water shortage. Sweet potatoes and sugar cane rank first among crops here.

311 243 [241] **Riceland** Okinawans prefer to eat rice rather than sweet potatoes whenever possible. It is a paradox, however, that areas of greatest farm population grow the least rice. The thinly populated north has the greatest amount of riceland. Map 3 charts the distribution of riceland---or flooded fields---on Okinawa. Even in the southern 'son' of Yonagusuku and Kanegusuku flooded fields often contain the mat rush rather than rice. It is a good cash crop, and is sturdier than rice when typhoons roar through the islands.

[128] [1] The figures upon which the maps in this section and the population section are based are found in Appendix A. The figures for Japan and Kagoshima-ken are given for comparative purposes. Of all the prefectures in Japan, Kagoshima most nearly resembles Okinawa in climate and emphasis upon sweet potatoes as a staple food.